Trade Deficit and Forex Losses

1526. DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the trade deficit for the years, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 (mid year appraisal);

(b) the causes of disturbing negative trends in exports this year and remedial steps being undertaken by Government;

(c) FOREX losses as a result of this; and

(d) whether imports have increased?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) As DGCI&S data, trade deficit is estimated at US $ 2324 million for 1994-95, at US $ 4881 million for 1995-96 and US $ 3248 million for the period April-December 1996-97.

(b) India's exports during April-December 1996-97 have registered a positive growth of 6.36% in dollar terms over the corresponding period of last year and not a negative growth. Export promotion is a continuous exercise through changes in policies and procedures to provide an export friendly environment, involvement of States in export-promotion, consultation with Trade and Industry, whereby appropriate measures, as required are initiated from time to time.

(c) Trade deficit is the difference between imports and export and as such would not be a measure of FOREX losses.

(d) Import during April-December 1996-97 have shown an increase of 4.4% in dollar terms over the corresponding period of last year.

Simplification of Export Promotion Schemes

1527. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently simplified the export promotion schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the views of the export houses were taken and the reaction of the export houses on simplification of export promotion schemes now; and

(d) to what extent exporters have been benefited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) to (d) Simplification of Export Policy and Procedures is a continuous process which is undertaken in consultation with the various Export Promotion Councils, concerned administrative Ministries and also keeping in mind the suggestions received from time to time from the trade and industry through their Apex bodies like FIEO, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CII etc. Some of the significant steps taken in this regard include provision of green channel clearance of export and import consignments to specified categories of exporters, progressive reduction of licensing and other dicretionary controls on imports and exports, increased delegation of powers for implementing the various export promotion schemes and introduction of computer based operations to expedite various clearances.

The efforts of these effarts may be seen in the growth of exports which in absolute terms increased from US $ 26.33 billion in 1994-95 to 31.83 billion in 1995-96.

Indian Exports to Kenya

1528. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's exports to Kenya have risen sharply;

(b) if so, the details thereof with name of items covered under such increased export;

(c) whether Government propose to take some measures for further increase of export with Kenya in future;